The Commonweal

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

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THE SEVENTY-FIFTH CONGRESS

"I HOPE that during the coming months all of you will have a happy vacation."

President Roosevelt's curt letter was read in both the Senate and the House just prior to adjournment. Congress had failed to dispose of the administration's ambitious five-point legislative program decided on when Mr. Barkley assumed leadership in the Senate. Mr. Roosevelt was very much displeased. The country at large immediately assumed the burden of debate which the weary legislators had joyfully relinquished. The question at issue was a statement made by Representative Rayburn, or some similar assertion, to the effect that any reports from "enemies, foreign or domestic that this Congress has been a sit-down Congress are made by those either ignorant of the facts or who are willingly attempting to distort the facts."

Was the Seventy-fifth Congress a sit-down Congress?

Before attempting to pass judgment upon our national legislature, let us first see what Congress did accomplish, and secondly, what it failed to accomplish.

On the credit side of the ledger—without regard to the individual merit of each piece of legislation—we find the enactment of the Guffey Coal Act, the farm tenancy measure, the law designed to plug "loopholes" in existing income taxes, the act making certain "procedural" changes in the lower courts, the Wagner-Steagall Housing Act, the measure providing for an unemployment census, the bill which removed federal restrictions on the fixing of resale prices on branded goods in states which permit price fixing, and the controversial sugar bill.

The debit side of the ledger reveals the failure to enact the Black-Connery Wages and Hours bill, the Farm Surplus Control bill, the Executive Reorganization bill, the bill to abolish or further

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regulate holding companies, the measures designed to improve safety at sea of American vessels, the anti-lynching bill, and the bill to create new regional power and navigation projects. The Senate defeated the President's surprise plan to reorganize the Supreme Court. Nothing was accomplished in the way of amending or revising previous legislation—such as the Social Security Law—which might well have been improved in the light of practical experience.

According to the press reports, the vote on the bill to plug the tax loopholes hitherto available to large income tax-payers was delayed for one day because of a plea made by Senator Schwellenbach that he have the opportunity to take the bill home to read it. We sincerely hope that all other senators scrutinized and pondered this complex measure. We do not think it beyond all credence, however, that many of Senator Schwellenbach's colleagues, for reasons which may have been weighty—such as the intense Washington midsummer heat, physical exhaustion, the merciless driving of administration leaders who sought to jam through measures in the shortest possible time, or an ardent desire to go home—failed altogether to scan this and other bills for which they nevertheless cast their ballots.

In common with all American citizens of whatever political persuasion or belief, we like to think that all bills directly affecting a great many people in all parts of the country should receive the utmost consideration and study from our elected legislators. If our faith in this regards is seriously injured or destroyed, and if in our opinion circumstances warrant it, we do not hesitate to say that Congress should promptly adjourn until such time as it has the leisure, the will and the temperament to deal with important national legislation in becoming and appropriate fashion.

We therefore conclude that the adjournment of Congress on August 21, even with a slight record of accomplishment, was for the good of the country. We subscribe to the view that the coming months will or should be devoted to a series of painstaking investigations and inquiries which doubtless will result in a more thorough and valuable legislative program. Next January, if Congress is not convened sooner, leaders and members of both the Senate and the House will have acquired a mass of information concerning wages and hours, the reorganization of the executive departments and the farm situation. This may have the effect, as one observer has pointed out, of narrowing the field of controversy and paving a smoother road for congressional action.

President Roosevelt's daring plan for the reorganization of the Supreme Court, and the bitter debate generated by it, was primarily responsible for congressional failure to enact much legislation of really major importance. It may be argued, in the words of David Lawrence, that "the session's time was frittered away largely by the whim of one man who stubbornly attempted to destroy popular government and majority rule in America." But we purposely refrain from stirring up controversy over the Supreme Court issue—a very dead issue. We prefer, rather, to concentrate attention upon the critical days ahead and to make, as we have been in the habit of doing since childhood, three heartfelt wishes.

First of all, we wish that Mr. Roosevelt will refrain in the future from assailing people in general who do not completely share his social and economic philosophy as Lord Macaulays, hidebound conservatives, Tories, Economic Royalists and Liberty Leaguers. Such accusations, not altogether warranted by the facts in each case, are beginning to get on the nerves of many citizens.

Secondly, we wish that Congress will continue to reassert its legislative powers. We do not want a "rubber stamp" Congress. We do not want a cringing, subservient, terror-stricken Congress. We do not want a Congress that will any longer tolerate the first New Deal tactics of "must" legislation, of complex and quite new legislation initiated either in some down-town Washington hotel room, or in the hidden office of some anonymous brain-truster. In short, we hope for a Congress such as the founding fathers of this nation envisioned it—a self-respecting, coordinate branch of the government of the United States, exercising all its constitutional rights and prerogatives.

Finally, we wish for generous measure of cooperation and fair play between the executive and legislative branches of our government—to the end that an equitable solution might speedily be found to the major problems now confronting this great democracy of free men.

Week by Week

The Trend of Events

WHILE members of Congress hastened to avail themselves of all the hard-earned pleasure of a quiet sojourn at the seaside or in some isolated mountain village, the administration kept a sharp watch on the brazen Japanese attempt to demonstrate to the world at large her fitness to rule over certain provinces in North China by inaugurating a barbaric reign of terror in Shanghai. We are of the opinion that the Neutrality Act, despite the fervent pleas of Senators Clark and Nye, should not be invoked against Japan and China. In the first place, the Act was not intended to be applied to Oriental as contrasted with European or Occidental nations. Neither nation, it should be noted, has actually made a formal declaration of war. Should the Act be invoked, Japan, vastly superior

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to China as a naval and maritime power, would have a great advantage in importing American war materials under our "cash and carry" plan. Secretary of Commerce Roper has directed national attention to the fact that application of embargoes on our shipments to the Orient would jeopardize or sacrifice "a pretty healthy and growing trade with China and Japan." Our present Neutrality Act demonstrates the folly of trying to be clairvoyant to the extent of forcing upon the nation certain laws and statutes that may, as in the present instance, prove highly embarrasing in the conduct of international affairs.

The Paramount Issue

IN A RECENT interview, Cardinal Goma, Primate of Spain, asserted that since the civil war began, he has exercised his pastoral ministry without any sort of political preoccupation. He denied that the Church in Spain had to choose between the rabid persecution of atheistic communism or the servility of totalitarian fascism. The so-called Fascists of Spain, he pointed out, "are men who have preserved the Christian and Catholic feeling of the race, and, as good Catholics, are not subjecting the Church to servitude." Emphasizing the fact that the war is a war of principles, of one civilization against another, of Marxist materialism against the spiritual values of our Christian civilization, he asserted that on the occasion of the insurrection of the army, "the national soul became incorporated in the military movement in vast and profound currents." This fearless statement is particularly timely in view of the vast amount of misinformation and false propaganda which continues to be disseminated in this country in a desperate attempt to confuse and becloud the paramount issue in the Spanish crisis.

Vatican Diplomacy

A MOST significant statement concerning modern Vatican diplomatic policy was recently made by the Most Reverend Fernando Cento, Apostolic Nuncio to Peru, who, as special representative of the Holy See, negotiated and signed a modus vivendi between the Vatican and the present government of Ecuador. The Church, he stated, prescinds the form of government, much less any fluctuation of internal policy, in her relations with States. Whether it be the case of an Emperor, a King, a First Consul, a President, a Duce or a Supreme Chief who offers the olive branch, the Church never rejects or refuses to accept it. The Church has never repulsed a gesture which manifests a genuine desire for concord. It should be obvious, in our opinion, that a concordat is not a special mark or sign of approval regarding the type or form of government of any nation in the world today. The Church is profoundly interested in peace and in promoting the cause of peace. If governments, in their dealings with one another, manifested the same zeal for peace, there would soon be an end to the intolerable fear and anxiety that grips millions of people who are witnessing, with a sort of dull despair, the preparations now being made for another world massacre.

Roosevelt versus Macaulay

THE PERIODIC historical and philosophic utterances of the President approach more closely to the intellectual and objective plane than we are accustomed to expect the speeches of politicians to go. But they do not go so far that we may fruitfully examine them as works of pure scholarship. The critics who treated the Roanoke address in the philosophical and historical manner can easily exhibit failings that would keep the speech from getting a first group in an institution such as President Roosevelt's alma mater, Harvard University. The Virginia speech did not depict the whole truth. A great majority is obviously not the whole people. A majority, no matter how overwhelming, must not have its own way to the extreme that it may oppress at will minorities and individuals. Those pioneers Mr. Roosevelt was celebrating were minorities at home, seeking the opportunity to lead kinds of lives denied them by old-world majorities. Anyone of moderately good will, it would seem, must recognize that the President knows all this. He knows that there must be a balance between the will of the greater number and the personal and social rights of the other human beings. He knows no adding machine declares infallibly after every election what type of life is best to impose on every citizen for the following couple of years. It would probably be much better for public peace if he frequently reiterated these things in very clear fashion. It would be harder at first to explain and dramatize what we take to be his other point, but in the not very long run the second point would be carried more convincingly. That is, that America has been exploited by an oligarchy who would like to keep right on exploiting it. That America has no faith in the ability and altruism of any settled segment of the populace, "the rich, the well-born and the able," which would permit us to resign our government into their hands without struggle. We do not believe in governmental, legal or economic privilege for groups of ourselves or our fellow-citizens. We believe that government of the people and for the people cannot long endure in our country unless it is also government by the people—the whole people with majorities unhindered by the special privileges of any class, but majorities loyally respecting the unalienable rights of weaker minorities.

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Pigeons on the Spree

AT THE first glance the news item from Berlin about the ex-Kaiser's pigeons (soon to be the ex-Kaiser's ex-pigeons) seems to be of a sort to please all readers on this side of the water. Certainly a public which has cause to wince over almost every happening detailed by the press cable, might very well find relaxation and happiness in learning that thousands of pigeons, the property of former royalty, are to be turned over to relief organizations to enrich the menus of Berlin's usually meatless poor. But they do these things so differently in Berlin that we shall miss our guess if there is not an indignant reaction here. For how are these birds to be secured? By net or spring or rifle or decoy? No—by feeding them peas soaked in alcohol and thus rendering them intoxicated! By one of those coincidences of which chance is so lavish, and which art does not emulate, all this is to happen on the Spree River—site of the imperial palace. As we have said, we feel it only too likely that many tender-hearted and high-minded people over here are going to protest this. But our approach is a little different. It is not so much the impairment of the morals of the pigeons that makes us wistful as the impairment of all that alcohol.

Humanity: Credit Side

THE MOTIVES which drive men will continue now to sadden and bewilder, now to exalt, those students of their kind who see the human drama not chiefly in terms of artistic invention and enhancement but in terms of random unpremeditated acts. We have lately spoken of the moral puzzle which constitutes, so to speak, a by-product of the Earhart case: the malignant mischief behind the simulated radio calls, the lying claim that the flyer had been found, starving and delirious, on an island near New Guinea. Now, as if to balance the scale, comes the story of heroism on board the destroyer Cassin, on which an explosion cost several lives. An enlisted man, Whitney McCallum, one of those who gained a safety chamber, "plunged back into the fireroom down an iron ladder. . . . His feet as well as his hands literally were cooked, but he kept on going" until he reached the valve and shut off the escaping steam. This man, as real a hero as any celebrated in immortal letters, died later of the injuries to which he gave no thought when his fellows were in danger. He is not one of a small company—God be thanked, this pure and selfless courage asserts itself in almost any mortal crisis. In the hierarchy of natural virtues it must stand very high. It is calculated to teach us afresh the essential positive quality of men, and to remind us that the natural at its best is also a reflection of the Divine.

Gargoyles and Such

AT A RECENT symposium on liturgical architecture attended largely by summer session students of Columbia University, the able secretary of the Liturgical Arts Society, Maurice Lavanoux, deftly criticized many churches for bad taste in both structural design and interior appointments. Candle-bearing angels who look like they are beginning a hundred-yard dash, "marble" altars made of wood, buttresses that buttress nothing, "soda-fountain" altars overburdened with unneeded candlelabra and decorations, and the mounting on ramparts of gargoyles "that don't gargoyle," were the objects of his special scorn. Mr. Lavanoux, like all valiant reformers, sees little to be admired in the old order of things. And yet those same gaudy, pseudo Romanesque and Gothic churches were an inspiration to our parents. Let us hope that when all our churches are liturigically correct and proper in every detail, that the religious zeal of our people will compare favorably with the generations who have gone before us into that land where, we hope, there is just one old plaster-of-Paris statue to put the builders of American Catholicism securely at their ease.

Coming of Age

THE FIRST important principle of the C.I.O. has been industrial unionism, a vertical organization cutting across craft lines. The C.I.O. has been very successful in gaining members and forming affiliates on this basis. The structural theory clearly has never formed a philosophy of trade unionism or policy for labor. Still, it was obviously not to the interest of the unions to try to formulate any exclusive doctrine in the midst of the organizational drives. There were certain primary purposes which all the union men agreed upon without theoretical debates—enough agreement to enable C.I.O. to take its first step. As the C.I.O. matures and obtains some of the power which is prerequisite to achievement, it must develop longer range ends or else its actions can have no consistency and no punch and its members will become inert or will drift out of the unions. The controversies within the Newspaper Guild and the great Automobile Workers Union indicate that C.I.O. is growing mature and meeting the inevitable internal problems of purpose and government. These hard controversies are of more importance to workers and to the country at large than the strikes have been. We can only pray that during this important period Catholics will be clear visioned enough and active enough in the labor movement to make the secular unions reflect more and more within their sphere the Christian aspirations to charity and justice.

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BLOY AND MARITAIN

By ELIZABETH S. KITE

THE NAME of Léon Bloy is hardly known in America. Had his sublime genius, his ardent Catholicity, his accepted mission of suffering, effected nothing more than the conversion of Jacques Maritain this alone should endear him to Catholics the world over. It is M. Maritain himself who permits us to cast a glance into the intimate romance that lies behind this miracle of God's grace, and Maritain is not the only thinker to come under his influence.

On a Sunday in June, 1905, "two children of twenty years climbed the interminable stairs" leading to the Sacré Coeur on the heights of Montmartre in Paris, on their way to visit "a man old, poverty-stricken, forsaken," a man to whom nevertheless they felt strangely drawn, the writer Léon Bloy.

The two "children," Jacques Maritain, of French Protestant ancestry, and his young wife, a Jewess, were students at the Sorbonne. Earnestly, though hitherto vainly, they had been seeking for some "refuge from the intellectual nihilism logically following in the train of all modern philosophies," and had even contemplated suicide as offering perhaps the one avenue of escape. It was at this crisis that two books of Léon Bloy fell into their hands, "La Femme pauvre" and "Salut par les Juifs."

These books were unlike anything they had ever read. Through them they caught a glimpse, "revealed as by lightning flashes . . . of the Divine meaning of human history" and of the possibility, even here below, of attaining the truth without which life seemed to them unendurable. This truth therefore they determined to seek even if it should prove to be Catholic truth. None the less a "terrible fear" haunted them. "Ignorant of Christian faith . . . and prejudiced against the Church" which they considered as a "rampart of the rich and powerful whose interest would naturally be to maintain the minds of the masses in the 'obscurity of the middle ages,' " they dreaded thrusting themselves into the presence of one who "disdaining all philosophies cried from the housetops the truth divine and absolutely Catholic with greater freedom than any revolutionary in the world."

Resolutely however they pressed on.

Having reached the top of the stairs they crossed in front of the Sacré Coeur, then turned down the little side street, Rue de la Barre. But before watching them enter the humble abode of Léon Bloy let us pause and cast a backward glance over the unusual life of this most unusual man.

The biography of Léon Bloy may be read in detail in the volumes of his "Journal" whose titles alone—such as "Le désespéré," "L'invendable," "Le mendiant ingrat" testify to the extraordinary character of their author. Briefly, Bloy was born in Perigueux, in 1846, the second in a family of seven sons. His father, an engineer who "sacrificed himself absolutely to work and duty," was an unbeliever. The mother, of Spanish ancestry, "was a saint in the most rigorous sense of the word, an absolute mystic." Bloy says of himself that he "was born sad as other people are born little or blond." From earliest childhood, Christianity appealed to him principally because of "the immensity of the sufferings of Christ, the grandeur, the transcendant horror of the Passion." With this inborn sadness there was also an ardent desire for joy, gaiety even; but often, so he says, he would refuse to join in the sports of others "because I felt it nobler to deny myself the gratification."

As time went on the very genius of the lad seemed destined to be his undoing. He had to be taken from college because he could not adapt himself to the routine of the classroom, nor could he be made to fit into any place that his father tried to procure for him. The life of a functionary was impossible to him. To the despair of the father was soon added the anguish of the mother, for while still a boy of only twelve years Bloy lost every vestige of his childhood faith.

It was then that his mother offered herself in holocaust for her son. In the words of Bloy:

> In a council of mysterious and ineffable sublimity, it was agreed between herself and God, that she would make the absolute sacrifice of health, the complete abandonment of all joy and human consolation and that in return there should be accorded her the entire and perfect conversion . . . of her son. . . . This prodigious bargain . . . received its immediate accomplishment. . . . Suddenly and without remedy she lost her excellent health . . . [so that] her life became a torture of twenty-four hours of the day. . . . I knew nothing of these things until after I became a Christian. Only then I realized that it was my mother who in torment had brought me to a second birth.

At the time of this surrender the mother was forty-three years old. Fifteen years later was consummated the other end of the bargain.

The conversion of Léon Bloy, when it came, was as instantaneous as it was complete. Between two days, as he expresses it, he saw himself pass "from radical unbelief to belief without limit."

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He wrote his mother:

> The profound truths revealed make me despise the impious doctrines of the day, and the proud sciences from which they spring and which are made the substitutes for faith.

Barbey d'Aurevilly, a man of letters, brilliant, an idol of society, and a Catholic more or less faithful in the practise of his religion, was the instrument employed by God to work the change. "A light arrow," deftly flung by him, "nailed me," says Bloy, "like an owlet to the radiant portal of the Church of Jesus Christ." Scarcely was the conversion completed than Bloy with characteristic honesty turned upon his elder friend in a passionate desire to make of him a more consistent Catholic. This was in 1873.

As for the life of Bloy now that he was a Christian, it was destined to be for many years to come, a veritable garden of agony. His mission, so it seemed, was to denounce, like an apocalyptic Jeremiah, the hypocrisies of the age in which he lived, though all the while loving his fellow men and longing for their sympathy and understanding. Nor did any effort of his ever succeed in providing for himself a decent living. Louis Veuillot tried him as editor of *l'Univers*. The experiment was only temporary. The two men could not work together. The same was true of Huysmans to whom Bloy for a time was tenderly attached. They had to go apart. Indeed no Catholic was Catholic enough to suit Bloy. He has said:

> I shall die without being able to understand the monstrous blindness of men who attribute any importance to that which is not their souls. Every one of my books is an attempt to explain the stupefaction which this inexplicable blindness produces in me.

Under these circumstances it is not surprising that he determined upon a step that had often been present to his mind. He entered *La Trappe*. Bloy carried with him however a new tie that bound him to the world, and soon convinced him that the peace so longed for in this world was not for him.

On the streets of Paris Bloy had encountered a young woman to whom he was strongly attracted because he says, "of her extreme singularity." Briefly, she had been a girl piously brought up but had early lost her parents. It had been intended that she should join the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity but she was not qualified to be a choir sister and her health proved too frail for her to do the work of a *soeur converse*. She then became a seamstress. What caused her fall does not appear, but Bloy was strangely drawn to her. The rigid rule of *La Trappe* could not banish from his mind the thought of Anne-Marie.

The Reverend Superior soon saw that the religious life was not for Léon Bloy. With sympathy and understanding on both sides the situation was cleared up. Bloy went back to Anne-Marie but with a fixed purpose to convert her and to lead her to change her mode of life. He succeeded so well that Anne-Marie became herself a mystic, developing stupefying powers of prophesy and uttering things sublime that became in time *idées inspiratrices* for Bloy's work, notably for important parts of "Salut par les Juifs," his *chef d'oeuvre*. Then the girl lost her reason and had to be confined. She was admitted into an asylum kept by religious where she died in 1907.

Years of inexpressable anguish succeeded for Bloy in which, with all his genius, he became the laughing stock of the literary world of Paris. It was during these years of torment that a beneficent angel crossed his path—the woman who a short time afterward became his wife, Jeanne Molbech, a Dane, who was converted before their marriage, which took place in 1890.

In "Le mendiant ingrat" Bloy has immortalized his wife. He says:

> . . . Certainly she was singularly and terribly elected to meet me, this noble Scandinavian, eldest and best-loved daughter of Christian Molbech [the poet]! . . . Was she not infinitely designated for voluntary penance and for propitiation? But it was doubtless necessary, oh how necessary! and since what eternity! that I should be the occasion and the privileged configuration of her holocaust. Could she descend any lower, this soul ambitious of immolating herself? Choose to be the companion of a man poor, universally detested! . . . Accept for herself perfect destitution, outrage, ridicule, disdain, calumny! All that and more if God asked it! . . .

It has been said that if from 1890 to 1901 Bloy, his wife and little ones did not actually starve it was owing to the goodness of heart of the editor of the *Mercure de France,* Alfred Valette, and his admirable wife, Rachilde. These good people realized the grandeur of Bloy and willingly published his books giving him advances on them and offering him constantly the encouragement of their appreciation. This generous help however could do no more than barely keep them alive. Illnesses, the death of two children, the inexorable rent, caused debts to pile up endlessly. Attending Mass daily, receiving our Divine Lord in Holy Communion, praying and weeping at the feet of the Blessed Mother, such was the life of Léon Bloy.

With the beginning of the century the younger set of literary men began to notice Bloy's writings and little by little to turn toward him. The first advance was made by Réné Martineau at Easter time, 1901. It marked the turning of the tide which, slowly at first, then with increasing volume, eddied and swirled about the aging patriarch, bringing joy and comparative ease to his declining years.

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In the spring of 1905, it was during a specially trying crisis in their lives that the first note of Jacques and Raïssa Maritain arrived asking to be permitted to visit them. They enclosed what they called apologetically "the smallest possible sum." Bloy, in an altogether characteristic reply said:

> . . . It costs me nothing to admit that the twenty-five francs were very welcome. That same morning I had been obliged to borrow a small amount from my barber for the breakfast of my wife and children. . . .
>
> Living in an age enemy of Art and Thought, deprived in consequence of the salary of my work, I am forced to subsist on what God gives me by a sort of uninterrupted miracle. We have lived in this way ever since our marriage in 1890. Ah! but not without the continual recurrence of periods of mortal anguish. . . . We know however that suffering, often extreme anguish, is good for the soul. My art as a writer is a flower blooming in an abyss. Every one of my books is an Act of Faith torn from me by torture. . . .
>
> There is no presumption in the fact of wishing for my friendship. If you are *ames vivantes,* as I suppose, the sad old man that I am loves you already and will be happy to see you.

Of the meeting which followed M. Maritain has written:

> To have crossed that threshold was to see values completely displaced as by an invisible mechanism. One knew or divined that there is only one affliction; that is, not to be saints. Everything else lost itself in twilight.

From that day forth the young people became for Bloy his dear friends sent of God—*des envoyés*. He wrote a few weeks later:

> You came so absolutely at the needed moment that your coming alone is sufficient to prove God's Providence.

The first letter of the young couple had been written on St. Barnabas Day, which fell on June 20 that year. As this was a specially beloved saint for Léon Bloy, June 11, date on which the feast fell for 1906, was chosen for their baptism and the solemnization of their Christian marriage. Bloy acted as godfather to both and also for a sister of the wife who was baptized with them.

Henceforth June 11 became a day of annual celebration for the two families and for the inner circle of their most intimate friends. To Bloy they were seasons of unspeakable joy.

The particular mission of his favorite godchild whom he had christened "Jacques-Christophe" was clear to Bloy from the beginning. He wrote:

> . . . The Christ-bearer holds a great place with us, to whom I have confided thee so particularly, so lovingly, so that he may carry thee across every torrent.

In another place he says:

> Thou art very much loved of God, my dear Christophe, and especially designed to carry His Son across the most furious and the most fetid torrents. Therefore there is nothing to fear for thy soul or for thy body. I say this not only for thee but for my exquisite and perfectly cherished godchildren, Raïssa and Vera.

Léon Bloy died November 3, 1917. Just before the end Madame Léon Bloy, leaning over him, asked if he felt any fear. He replied: "Pas peur, mais une immense curiosité."

THE DEPTHS OF BOLSHEVISM

By EUGENE KEVANE

BOLSHEVISM is fundamentally anti-religious, aptly called "an Anti-God movement in the name of our daily bread": social injustice is rather its condition than its cause. What then is the intrinsic nature of Bolshevism?

The Bolshevist view of life contains two distinct elements. The first is dialectical materialism, a scaffold built to support the second. And the second is a secularized apocalypticism, the idea of the messianic vocation of the proletariat to revolt and create a static condition of social perfection. That is the soul of Marxism. We must remember that Marx was a Jew: in him were the pent-up passions and repressed messianic hopes which kept the Jewish people alive through all those centuries in the miserable ghettos of Christendom. He lost his faith in Judaism, true, but not his messianic hope. He simply transferred it from the Jews to the proletarian class.

Bolshevism is a religion—the perfect worldly religion as such—aiming at the redemption of all mankind from the original sin of exploitation by the one remaining class innocent of that sin. And the means of that redemption is the creation of a new and specifically higher type of man: the collective or mass-man. Its normal element is in the exact philosophical sense the sociological organization of the pursuit of temporal beatitude. Thus it is the logical development of our apostate Christian culture; when Christendom lost its faith in a heaven to come, the superhuman *élan* of its energy lived on, perverted to this—worldly end. And that an intermediate individualism should give way to an uniquely powerful social effort to

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erect a Kingdom of Heaven on earth is not surprising. Bolshevism therefore is what it is and why it is because of what the culture giving it birth was and has come to be. It is conditioned in its origin, inner nature and goal by that secularized form of culture.

To understand the fundamental nature of Bolshevism, we must integrate it in the whole social problem of fallen mankind: how can the interactivity of free persons be kept harmonious, peaceful and just? The answer is to be found in their common nature; for the activity of a group of persons flowing from the same nature or principle of activity will of course be harmonious: that is social justice. In God, the three Divine Persons possess numerically the same nature; hence, although the individual personality is there to perfection, their activity is harmonious: one cannot exploit the other: there can be no social injustice in the Trinity. But human persons since the fall by nature tend to love themselves inordinately, to abuse their neighbors to their own advantage; and when this is done by groups, we have social injustice: exploitation. Evidently, this humanity must be healed in some way: it must be redeemed.

History seems to offer just two types of redemption, as diametrically opposed as heaven and hell. The first is God's solution to the problem, called the Mystical Body of Christ. In its social aspect it means this: the free human personality remains, but is elevated and perfected by the intrinsic renovation of its human nature. And more than this—it is given a new nature, the *gratia capitis* of Christ, so that the many human personalities live and act supernaturally by the same supernature of Christ. *Imago Trinitatis*. Their activity becomes His activity. Evidently this solves the social problem—those personalities will not want to exploit each other: social justice will arise out of supernatural love.

The Middle Ages—the ages of widespread personal holiness—saw this solution practised with relative perfection. We meet the astounding fact that more property changed hands then by charitable donation than by business transaction.

Nevertheless, since then, by some mysterious tragedy, mankind has been progressively refusing that solution of internal personal renovation by divine grace, has been building out of mere human nature. The result of this humanism is the social system of today, in which millions must starve in India and China while cottonfields are burned in America, and wheat and corn abused for fuel. This system of want in the midst of plenty is its own condemnation: for a thing is not judged by its fallen level, but by the perfection which it once by vocation attained. Our culture is not measured by the standards of laissez-faire, nor even by the natural law, but by the Sermon on the Mount. And the tremendous hiatus, that yawning gap, between the Sermon on the Mount and our social practise is the sore upon which Communism feeds as a cancer on the decayed body of Christendom.

For Communism is the second redemption, diametrically opposed to the organic personalism of the Mystical Body. The whole past has started to solve the problem of mankind at the wrong end. It is hopeless to try to get men to live in peace and social justice by an internal renovation of individual personality. That attempt has failed, say the Bolshevists: look at the condition of our twentieth-century society.

Then, like the fanatical religious apostles that they are, they in ecstatic transport announce the first organized attempt in history to penetrate to the very nature of man, to make a correction there. The result is in exact terms a sociological infernal machine.

For the Marxists, blinded by technical progress, say that the machine (and not the mythological Trinity) is the ideal example of the smooth cooperation of many parts in a harmonious total activity: there is no abuse of one part by another precisely because those parts have no personality. And so with mankind: true redemption can come only by the total destruction, the radical annihilation, of individual personality. Humanity must be reconstructed to the image and likeness of the machine. Everything that in the past has separated man from man must be rooted out—every subjective element giving individuality, every feeling, emotion, passion: all must be collectivized. But especially the soul, for the soul is the source of individual personality, the essence of the old bourgeois man, the principle of all bourgeois culture: art, philosophy and religion. The family and private property, those hot-beds of personality, and above all the idea of a personal God: all must be crushed out. Here we are at the bottom of the Bolshevist hatred for all we hold noble. And let it be remarked: such a humanism presupposes atheism—one must deny a personal God first, before he can desire to build such a humanity.

Now, having annihilated personality, we come to the positive side of the new worldly redemption. These depersonalized, external remnants of what were once men capable of being incorporated into the Mystical Body, are clasped together by external organization (which replaces grace), and fitted onto the skeleton of economic production, so that finally there arises, as the Bolshevists say, the "brotherly union." External organization of lifeless cogs of a giant socio-economic machine: that is the answer to the Mystical Body!

A new world is rising in Russia, a mechanical world, peopled by soulless machines. The new social man, the mass-man, has been born of the labor of the proletariat. By means of this new creation, which shall incorporate the whole world,

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all mankind shall be redeemed from all pain and suffering, from all evil and exploitation. The Kingdom of Heaven shall be brought to earth; Christ, the God-man, shall be replaced by the Man-god. For the Bolshevists say that this new mechanical unit shall be perfectly self-sufficing, the perfectly autonomous and free master of history and its own destiny. *"Eritis sicut Deus"*: that is the devil's treacherous whisper to mankind, first heard by Adam and Eve; to be like God, not by the humble road of grace, but by the proud powers of his unaided nature. And now for the first time autonomous mankind is trying as a group to be like God. Bolshevism is the absolute, total, sociological surrender to that temptation.

In this messianic hope and ideal and goal, we have reached the essence of Bolshevism. And we should expect that result: such a phenomenon is unexplainable on any but religious grounds. Russia, the heroic resistance of the Reds in Spain, the astounding zeal of the world-wide propaganda, the uncompromising anathema of every other religion: such can be due only to a living faith, not a mere theory. Since 1917, Bolshevism has gained 15,000,000 party members. Now this party was modeled by Lenin explicitly on the rules and ascetical requirement of the Jesuits. These 15,000,000 are simply the picked saints of between 100,000,000 and 200,000,000 followers. The conclusion of several world-authorities is evident: Bolshevism is the most active, the most aggressive, the most fanatical religious movement of our time. Religion with a minus sign: the perfect worldly religion. And is not the devil the prince of this world?

Now, it is not enough, for example, to say that "Christianity is a religion"—we want to know the hidden source of that religious power. And of course the answer is the disinterested, self-sacrificing love of God. So for Communism, it does not suffice to say that it is essentially a religion: we must seek the secret dynamo of its terrific energy. It is the disinterested, self-sacrificing hatred of God. This is the core of Bolshevism, the determining principle of its humanism, its materialistic metaphysics and its economics. No real Bolshevist was ever without this hatred. When Engels or Lenin or Bucharin write of God, their manner changes, they fly off in a frenzied passion of uncontrolled hatred, frightful to read. But more frightful yet are the ascetical private lives of these men: although disposing of tremendous power and wealth, ruling continents, they hardly spend a cent on themselves, they practise heroic self-oblation to their ideal.

The so-called "reasons" for this hatred—the union of religion with the old order, its supposed deadening effect on the masses, etc.—can never account for a world-wide, organized hatred of God Himself, such as never before seen in history. There is more concerned here: we are face to face with the might and power of Satan, who wars on God. The energies spring up in the negative, which in the positive are called heroic sanctity.

And with that, our philosophical inquiry has gone over into theology. The essence of Bolshevism contains an element of disinterestedness too deep for mere reason. For there are only two types of superhuman and absolute disinterestedness: that of the All-perfect Being, Whose perfection can receive no addition; and that of Satan, the being who cannot increase the utter abandon of his degradation. Thus is hinted the explanation of those negative "saints," who commit evil, not out of private interest, nor carnal weakness, but out of love—that negative love which is the hatred of everything proceeding from God. This hatred is unique, preternatural; as Christ said, "They hate Me without cause."

Only thus can we explain Bolshevist Russia, where 160,000,000 people are whipped up to the most diabolical burst of energy. There is no parallel for the gigantic economic effort being made in Russia. And it is succeeding! Russia, from a most backward country twenty years ago, is rapidly becoming the greatest material (that is, economic and military) power of all time. Russia seems goaded by furies into the strait-jacket of the new social god-machine, until the new beast, the inhuman mass-man, stands impatiently in the hands of its masters, stamping its million feet, ready to pour out of Russia to redeem humanity in a holocaust of blood. Back of the mass-man stands the gloomy and sinister Stalin, in somber meditation on his vocation: Stalin is possessed by the idea that he is to redeem all mankind by conquering the world, and forcing it into the happiness of the atheistic social machine.

Maritain would seem to be right: "A happy age is dawning, in which we can die for the sake of God alone; not for the nation, nor for humanity, nor for the revolution, nor for progress, nor for science: but for God alone."

Vocation

You have not stood on summits high above
In face of rugged winds all day, all night—
But how they have pursued you, O my love,
In sheltered caves and groves of green delight;
Have sought you when the whiteness of the snow
Is all you would have seen beneath the moon,
Have followed where the crimson roses blow,
And you have found them withered at noon.
No rose-enchanted radiant day of peace,
No deep and poppied slumber shall you find
Beneath a blue-starred night where winds shall cease,
No song to reach the shadows of the mind,
Yet down the long wind you shall hear the cry,
"O come, and pluck the lilies of the sky!"

SISTER MARY ATHANASIUS.

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BEHIND THE NEWS IN CHINA

By FREDERICK V. WILLIAMS

JAPANESE strategy has drawn the military power of China to Shanghai and away from Chahar and Hopei—Peiping and Tientsin in the North. It has also smoked Chiang Kai-shek's crack and trained divisions—Chiang Kai-shek's famed "Own" that hold him in power—out of Nanking and into Shanghai whereas the Generalissimo had managed to keep them safe and intact for future emergencies and out of the Peiping and Tientsin Incidents. It did this to gain time to dig in and tighten Nippon's grip on the newly gained North and to put the best that China has in soldiers on a spot where Japan could get at them directly and quickly and do away with the danger and expense of a long and drawn out guerilla war. The Japanese knew also that if their Navy tied up Shanghai, supplies from abroad to the China armies would be blocked and Chinese credit for carrying on the fight would be hurt abroad. Dr. Kung, the Finance Minister, has been shopping in Europe for guns and ammunition with no way to insure their delivery.

After stating these conclusions from observations just made in the Orient, I must add that on the other hand China seemed glad to take advantage of the Shanghai battle for several reasons. The central government has been trying to "kill" Shanghai for some time. It has regarded Shanghai as a foreign and not a Chinese city. It has done its best to entice the Shanghai banks to move to Nanking. Its ambition has been to make Nanking, the new capital between Shanghai and Peiping, the metropolis of the Orient. In this the central government has met with stiff opposition from the foreign element in China.

Nanking as a matter of fact doesn't care whether Shanghai is laid in ruins and is never rebuilt again. China had another idea too in welcoming conflict with the Japanese at Shanghai. China believes her sole hope in defeating Japan is by the intervention of the foreign powers. China—and by China we mean here the Nanking government of Chiang Kai-shek—China was sure that if it gave battle to Japan in Shanghai the foreign powers would have to intervene to protect their nationals.

The Japanese now realize that their trap for China worked both ways; that China tried to set a trap for them, and that long before the outbreak Nanking had covertly moved tens of thousands of her soldiers into Shanghai proper. This the Japanese point out was a direct violation of the agreement of 1932 by which China agreed to keep its soldiers fifty miles from the city.

However, during my recent trip in the East, I did not find Japan worrying over Shanghai. Japan was caught napping, actually did need more men to do the job she had set herself to do, and had to call on the army, but Japan has the satisfaction of knowing that she has the best that Chiang Kai-shek has to offer concentrated in one place where she can work out on them.

Also Japan knows that hunger and lack of pay will do as much if not more than shells and shrapnel in beating the enemy. There was a time when Japan looked on Chiang Kai-shek as something pertaining to the stability of China with whom she sought to trade and whom she considered a counterweight to the Communism from Russia which Japan hates and fears and would crush, and against which she regards herself as the sole bulwark in the Far East. When the Generalissimo was kidnapped, won his liberty at the price of peace with the Communists and subscribed to their anti-Japanese program, which Japan claims is also an anti-foreign program, Chiang Kai-shek went on the Japan blacklist.

The longer fighting goes on in and around Shanghai the less centralized control can the Nanking High Command have of its forces, and they think that the populace, hungry and desperate, will turn to mob violence to get food and loot, and that when these mobs turn on the foreigners the Powers will turn their guns on the Chinese, a situation similar to the Boxer uprising.

The Communists, Russian inspired, who have never liked Chiang Kai-shek in spite of their recent peace with him, will turn on Nanking at the first sign of a weakening of the central government's control.

Japan is aware that she must make short and quick work of her conquest of the part of China, for she cannot stand a long and costly conflict. In Manchukuo she played Santa Claus. This present Incident must be made to pay and pay quickly. Manchukuo in reality has been regarded by Japan as but the stepping stone to a return of the old Chinese Empire with which Japan can live in peace and with harmonious business relations.

The Japanese viewpoint, as one may gather by talking with those of the High Command, is that they had to strike when they did or China would in a year or two have reached a state of preparedness, with Russian help, that would have made China an actual military rival and a danger. For a year or more China has been getting ready to fight. Even her city police have been trained as soldiers. She needed two years more before en-

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gaging in a war with Japan. Japan "beat her to the punch."

There was also Russia to be considered. The Russians have been encouraging China to get ready, promising China they would join them, but recent events in Russia have made it impractical for Stalin and the Soviet to risk their Red armies out of the country for fear of a revolt at home.

All this was taken into consideration by Japan. She knew Moscow would join Nanking. She knew China expected her too. She knew China was getting ready. Japan knew both Russia and China wanted back the Manchukuo she controlled, and that to hold that which she had won she must strike again. Tokyo knew she must strike at the psychological moment. That moment came when the alliance was made between Germany and Japan with Germany at Russia's back door, when Europe was engrossed in Spain, when Stalin began shooting his generals in the Moscow purge and could not afford to fight.

The people in Japan have been sold on the idea that what is taking place in China is necessary for their country, and they appear to be willing to sacrifice and fight: sacrifice at home, fight abroad. I found unity, solidarity among them. They have entrusted into the hands of the generals their future, which, in the Japanese mind, lies in dominance of the Far East by Japan.

THE MORMON WAY OF DOING THINGS

By PAUL SULLIVAN

THERE has been much discussion of late about religious instruction for the children who attend the public schools. Those who have taken part in this discussion are the clergy and laity of Protestant denominations as well as of the Catholic Church.

However, it is not my intention here to pass critical judgment on any proposal whether its source be Protestant or Catholic. It is my intention to relate how an American sect, the members of which settled near the shore of the Great Salt Lake nine decades ago, has met this problem of religious instruction in the state of Utah.

Succinctly, the prevailing notion beyond Utah and the immediately surrounding states is that the Mormons are very peculiar creatures. The Mormon Church has some bizarre articles of faith, and the tenacious attachment to "The Word of Wisdom"—meaning thereby total abstinence from liquors, tea, coffee and the various forms of tobacco, etc.—is unusual, but the younger generation pays little attention to "The Word of Wisdom." Other than these peculiarities, the Mormons are quite as human as you and I.

The second part of this notion is the one that is important to refute. Mormonism does not reck of fanaticism. There is a solidity and positiveness of religious conviction among the bona fide membership that is every whit as unshakable as the faith and conviction of a Catholic. True, the Mormon philosophy, what there is of it, is materialistic, and free will is denied in fact if not by admission, and there can be no sin if they are true to their theological concepts, but, emphatically, they do not thrive on fanaticism. If anyone disbelieves this, let him live among them for a quarter of a century as I have done.

When the constitution for the state of Utah was drawn up in convention assembled, provision was made for a state-controlled public school system that would be constitutionally guaranteed free from the interference or control of any religious denomination whatsoever. There was, no doubt, need for special caution by the national government because of the overwhelming preponderance of Mormons in the territory of Utah at that time. This cautious attitude is evidenced by the following ordinance that appears in the constitution along with one abolishing and prohibiting polygomous marriages: "The legislature shall make laws for the establishment and maintenance of a system of public schools, which shall be open to all the children of the state and be free from sectarian control." Article X, Section 1, of the constitution is almost identically worded: "The legislature shall provide for the establishment and maintenance of a uniform system of public schools, which shall be open to all children of the state, and be free from sectarian control."

Because of these fundamental legal prohibitions to religious instruction in the public school curriculum, the Mormon leaders were moved to work out a method whereby they might impart religious instruction.

On a piece of property either adjacent to or across the street from each high school in the state, a building large enough to accommodate a good-sized class of students was constructed.

The buildings are open each school day just as are the school buildings. An instructor is provided and paid by the Mormon Church. Classes are arranged to dovetail with the regular high school classes. The principals of the high schools lend their cooperation and permit the students to register for classes in free hours, and attend these classes just as they attend their curriculum classes.

When I was attending high school in one of the smaller communities, the seminary class was thought of as being just another class. The students and instructors looked upon the superintendent as one of the school faculty. In fact, he coached the high school girls' basketball team.

Students who, like myself, were "gentiles" gave little thought to this method of "getting around" the state constitution. Not a few of the "gentile" students attended the seminary classes with their Mormon classmates.

I have written this paper with a view to interest rather than as a suggested method of coping with the burning question of complete secularization of public schools in the United States. I also wanted to deny that fanaticism abounds in the valley made verdant by the irrigation genius of the early Mormon leader, Brigham Young. If those who are still unconvinced could see nearly 100 seminary buildings scattered over the 85,000 square miles of Utah, they would not long remain unconvinced.

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Seven Days' Survey

The Church.—A new society of priests—the Home Mission Society—is being organized in this country under the sponsorship of Archbishop McNicholas of Cincinnati. Special methods are to be developed for rural America following the approach of the Maryknoll Order to the specific problems of the Far East. * * * Some 45,000 of war-torn Shanghai's 3,500,0000 inhabitants are Catholics. As in 1932 the Franciscan Sisters, who operate the Sacred Heart Hospital on Soochow Creek, have refused to leave the institution although they are in extreme danger. * * * Every seven years four great relics are exhibited at the Cathedral of Aix-la-Chapelle, Germany: the Blessed Virgin's cloak, the swaddling clothes of the Infant Jesus, a loin-cloth worn by Our Lord and the cloth which once wrapped the head of John the Baptist. Government authorities placed many obstalces in the way, but more pilgrims than in 1930, nearly 1,000,000, assembled. * * * Representatives from nine nations, including the United States, attended an International Catholic Conference at Dublin, Ireland. Cardinal MacRory, Primate of All Ireland, told the delegates, "I consider that there is something radically wrong in allowing half a dozen or a dozen statesmen, however great they may seem to be, to declare war; and more especially in these days when it has become a thing of such appalling destructiveness even to the civil population. . . ." Reverend J. Delbos, O.P., of the Catholic University of Lille, declared that a small group holding fast to and teaching true social principles could do an incalculable amount of good even where the government had control of all the means of political propaganda. Citing the French Christian Trade Unions and Catholic Social Movement as encouraging signs, Father Delbos said, "It is for us Catholics to save the leaven of truth, which in due time will do its work."

The Nation.—Harry L. Hopkins announced that during the last eighteen months 1,500,000 workers had left the WPA. On July 31 the United States Employment Service had 4,938,998 active job seekers registered on its rolls, 1.5 percent fewer than at the end of June and 26.7 percent fewer than in July, 1936. The total is 1,800,000 less than last year and 2,620,000 less than two years ago. July placements numbered 341,353, of which 207,588 were with private business, the latter figure being a gain of 76 percent over July, 1936. * * * The Department of Agriculture announced that the total mortgage debt on farms declined more than $1,500,000,000 from 1930 to 1935. The percentage of this total held by governmental agencies, chiefly the FCA, rose from 12 in 1928 to about 33 in 1935. It is believed that the percentage has climbed now to about 40. * * * The annual convention of the American Pharmaceutical Association—the drug stores—resolved to form a council "to properly and honestly guide and protect the public" in the use of cosmetics. The convention approved the U. S. Public Health Service campaign against venereal diseases; deplored congressional inaction in regard to pure food, drug and cosmetic legislation; and came out strongly in favor of the "fair trade laws" passed in forty-three states and of the Tydings-Miller federal Fair Trade Act. * * * A WPA report on the coal industry showed that between 1929 and 1935 the number of workers on payrolls of bituminous mines declined 40,000, or 8 percent. In anthracite mines the decline was 50,000 men, or 33 percent. Competition of other fuels was held largely responsible, but mechanization accounted for some of the decrease. Mechanization is also reflected in the decrease of the wage ratio to the total cost. In 1935 the wage ratio was 61.2 percent; thirty years ago it was 70.3 percent. * * * The burying of the Wages and Hours bill by a departing Congress displeased large sections of labor, whose sentiments were voiced by John L. Lewis, and also many members of the dominant party who predicted action next year.

The Wide World.—Spanish Nationalists captured Torrelavega, key to Santander, without a fight. A speedy end to the campaign is expected. * * * A joint statement by the governments of Brazil and the United States revealed that the two powers intended to complete the plan of leasing old American destroyers to the Brazilian government for training purposes. * * * Seventeen more persons were executed in Russia as Trotskyist saboteurs. * * * The Mandates Commission of the League of Nations approved in principle the British attempt to solve the Palestine problem by partition, but insisted that the Jewish and Arab States should continue under mandate until ripe for statehood. * * * Portugal severed diplomatic relations with Czechoslovakia because a Czech arms firm failed to deliver a Portuguese machine-gun order. * * * Addressing several hundreds of thousands of Sicilians at Palermo, Premier Mussolini declared that Italy is ready to collaborate with all powers and launched an appeal for peace to all countries with interests in the Mediterranean. He stated his belief that a stable settlement of all difficulties between Italy and Britain can be found and emphasized the fact that there is nothing between Italy and France that need be dramatized. Italy, he concluded, will rest content if the League of Nations acknowledges the end of Ethiopia as an independent State by excluding Haile Selassie's representatives from further participation in Geneva's work.

* * * *

The China War.—Thus far the Chinese have offered vigorous resistance to the Japanese. From the main battlefront, which extends from Nankow 150 miles to the sea, came news of varying successes. Northeast of the embattled Nankow Pass the Japanese claimed to have captured Kalgan and to be moving down to entrap the

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Chinese defenders, whose position appeared to be increasingly perilous. Heavy fighting was also reported just south of Peiping, where a large Japanese force was said to be endangered by Chinese flanking movements. South of Tientsin the twenty-ninth Chinese army was reported to have retaken Chinghai by storm. Chinese forces in this northern area were estimated at 150,000 with the Japanese rushing reinforcements to bring their total to 100,000 men. Large districts of the city of Shanghai were said to be in flames with others already reduced to ashes. Bombardments continued in section after section of the city. The first two weeks of the battle raging about the city were believed to have exacted casualties of 100,000. The Japanese announced a blockade of Chinese shipping from north of Shanghai to the southern tip of China. The Japanese war machine is just beginning to get under way. In the North clearing skies promised to release vast forces and armaments bogged down by weeks of rain. The Tokyo cabinet is believed to have decided to increase its Chinese expeditionary forces to 250,000 men, the full strength of the regular army. One of the most mystifying elements of the war is how the Nipponese can finance the extensive operations needed to gain their objectives. The Chinese are planning to float an issue of 500,000,000 "national salvation bonds" in denominations of from $1 to $10,000.

Government Finance.—As Congress adjourned the public debt approached very close to the $37,000,000,000 mark. The excess of expenditures this fiscal year—since July 1—was $331,314,4552.99 on August 24, as compared with only $270,633,829.09 at the same date last year. Reduced returns from revolving funds, such as the R.F.C. and the Commodity Credit Corporation, have more than counter-balanced increases in tax returns and reductions in expenditures for recovery and relief. September 15 will be the maturity date for $817,483,500 in 3¼ Treasury notes. During the following three days about $350,000,000 in Treasury short term discount bills will come due. Recently short term bills have been refunded into long term government obligations when due. The government bond market is now, however, unusually weak. The banks, which carry over half the public debt, are selling more investments and lending more cash for business purposes, especially for moving the large crops. This cuts down the market for government bonds and stiffens interest rates which in turn lowers the prices of government and other first class bonds. Fearing a fall in government credit and disapproving a rise in interest rates, the Federal Reserve Board reduced rediscount rates ("the charge made by Federal Reserve Banks to member banks for lending money on securities") and the Treasury stated it would refund only the September 15 notes and would pay off the $350,000,000 of discount bills in cash due from income taxes. The government thus took a new tack and fought a possible deflationary tendency by preserving what the orthodox considered a set-up of tremendous potential credit inflation. The banks were still in the dilemma of wanting to increase commercial loans at higher rates to make money and at the same time wanting to preserve the value of their vast government portfolios.

K. of C.—Continuance of their vigorous campaign against atheistic Communism and a renewal of their protest against the persecution of the Catholic Church in Mexico were voted by approximately 3,000 members of the Knights of Columbus attending the organization's fifty-fifth supreme convention in San Antonio. Martin H. Carmody, Supreme Knight, asserted that more than fifty Bishops and over 6,000 priests delivered addresses on Communism in the councils and at public meetings. K. of C. representatives addressed 557 key meetings in 53 jurisdictions at which were present officers and members from 1,369 councils. With regard to Mexico, Mr. Carmody declared that the K. of C. protest against the persecution "brought responses from around the world that condemned Mexican policies and heartened the Mexican people to continue to fight for their religious rights and liberties." The organization has 60 state and three territorial jurisdictions. Fifteen new subordinate councils were organized and instituted in the course of the year. Assets of $46,665,223.95 were listed.

National Housing Act.—The House and Senate submitted to the President the amended Wagner-Steagall Housing Bill, enacted just before Congress adjourned. Our first national housing act sets up a United States Housing Authority empowered to sell $500,000,000 worth of bonds with principal and interest guaranteed by the government to make this sum available to public housing groups in the next three years. If the money is loaned, the Housing Authority will supply up to 90 percent of the cost of the project; if it is an outright grant, the Housing Authority will contribute as much as 25 percent, with an added 15 percent if the President authorizes the expenditure for labor costs. On loans the local communities furnish 10 percent of the outlay; on grants they must contribute 20 percent. The act also provides for government subsidies of 3½ percent a year of the total cost of the project for lowering rents. Loans will carry interest charges of 3 percent and must be amortized in 60 years. A compromise set at 15 percent the limit of the housing funds to be expended in any one state. In cities of over 500,000 a cost of $5,000 is allowed for a family unit of four rooms and $4,000 elsewhere; builders were said to be dubious whether this construction could be accomplished without sacrificing fireproofing and durability. Families with incomes less than five times the rental can qualify as tenants, but if they have three or more minor dependents the qualifying income can amount to six times the rental. In New York City, despite the demolishing or conversion of 1,162 old-law tenements in 1936, nearly half a million dwelling units in 60,000 old-law tenements are still occupied.

Nocturnal Adoration.—Ten years ago the Nocturnal Adoration Society was little known in the United States. Today the society boasts of twenty-nine branches in thirteen different dioceses, of which Rochester with six

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branches is the banner diocese. Members spend one hour each month in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament. They chant the Office of the Blessed Sacrament, spend some time in silent meditation on the mysteries of Christ's life, and recite in common various prayers. This is done with the firm conviction that they are in the very presence of God, hidden only by the sacramental veils. The hours of the night were chosen because it is a society for men and it would be difficult for them to spend an hour during the day; also, because the quiet of night and early morning (from ten p. m. to six a. m.) lends itself more easily to prayer and recollection. The Nocturnal Adoration Society owes its origin to a pious priest of Rome, the Reverend Giacomo Sinibaldi, who gathered about him several laymen, drafted a constitution and formed the society, November 21, 1810. The first night of adoration held in France was in the Parisian church of Notre-Dame des Victoires in 1840. Twenty-three years later an English branch was formed in the Kensington Chapel of the Carmelite Monastery. In 1887, a member of the Parisian Supreme Council journeyed to Madrid to establish the society in Spain. Forty years later (1927) a report read at the Eucharistic Congress of Madrid stated there were more than 100,000 members and 653 branches of the society. Mexico today has over 300 branches and more than 75,000 active members. The society first came to the United States in 1882 when Dr. Thomas Dwight established a branch at Boston's Holy Cross Cathedral. On November 4, 1929, the Roman Archconfraternity for Nocturnal Adoration raised the New York branch at St. Jean Baptiste Church to a National Center, empowering it to affiliate similar societies in the United States to the parent society in Rome.

Poland and Jewry..—A report on the situation of the Jews in Poland was recently prepared by the International Missionary Council of New York. Two of the Council's members, Canon S. Gould and Mr. Conrad Hoffman, jr., recently returned from Poland where they studied the problem. A brief digest of their report follows. Ten percent of the total population today (3,500,000 persons) are Jews. They control about sixty-one percent of the total trade and commerce of the country and have also a majority in the total membership of both the medical and legal professions. The Polish peasants, released from the shackles of serfdom and enjoying for the first time in their history the advantages of education, and crowded off the land, are demanding opportunities for earning a living in the larger spheres of trade, of the professions, of commerce. About one million Jews are facing starvation. At least as great a number of peasants are in the same position. The available economic substance of the country appears to be insufficient for the support of the existing population which is increasing by 500,000 every year. General charges of anti-semitism, whether leveled against the people as a whole or the central government of the country, cannot be sustained. Anti-semitic literature and propaganda, however, is being distributed and conducted. The first possible solution of the problem is emigration for Jews and peasants alike. Secondly, the adequate industrialization of the country. Thirdly, the complete cooperation in mutual good-will and helpfulness of Jew and Gentile alike in a great task of devoted service and self-sacrifice for the good of Poland.

Labor.—Talk of a new third party reached still more important proportions during the week. Besides speculation on the future course of President Roosevelt and other strong New Dealers such as the LaFollettes, there was more specific talk about a new labor alignment. John L. Lewis did not disguise his disillusionment with the past Democratic Congress. The Socialist party, having again purged itself, this time of its more radical members, inclined more strongly toward a broad farmer-labor organization. In New York the American Labor party, most fervent backer of Mayor La Guardia, appeared to have real strength. Finally, President Green voiced suspicion of Labor's Non-Partizan League which he has up to now supported, fearing that it was becoming a political tool of the C.I.O.—a charge flatly denied. At the United Automobile Workers convention in Milwaukee a message of greeting from the Democratic President and another from the New Dealer Assistant Secretary of Labor McGrady evoked great enthusiasm. Delegates this year represented 375,000 members whereas last year the union had only 30,000, was immersed in an internal struggle. President Martin and Richard T. Frankensteen were leaders of the "progressives," and Vice President Wyndham Mortimer and Ed Hall led the "unity" group. The "progressives" in general favor strong central control and strong discipline from the elected president down. They dislike "outside influence" gaining in the union or in any of the locals, and it was clear that the "influence" meant the Communist party. The "unity" group want much more local autonomy and want the executive officers to be able to vote on important questions with a majority of them able to overrule the president.

Non-Catholic Religious Activities. — Referring to church colleges as "the battlefront of freedom in America," Dr. Gould Wickey urged delegates attending the Sixth Annual Conference of Church-Related Colleges, which met in Asheville, N. C., August 19, to combat the un-Christian competition in education, the regimentation and the secularization of schools. * * * The Federal Council of Churches has asked clergymen to use "greater Christian effort on behalf of workingmen's rights" as the theme of their Labor Sunday messages. The United Christian Council for Democracy urged that "workers be enabled to protect themselves against the economic powers arrayed against them." The Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church will take as its text that "it is the task of the church to find a better technique of social change than the barbaric methods of force, lawlessness and violence." * * * A movement has been launched at Leesburg, Va., to introduce religious education into the public schools of Loudoun County by the Parent-Teacher Association and various religious organizations. The Association will finance religious education classes which pupils may or may not attend according to individual wishes or the wishes of their parents. More than 10,000 were enrolled in the state last year.

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Communications

"RERUM NOVARUM" AND LABOR

Glace Bay, Nova Scotia.

TO the Editor: Major W. F. Kernan ("'Rerum Novarum' and Labor," August 6) has struck the nail on the head by bringing relations between worker and worker and employers and employees down to philosophic hard pan. I don't know whether the Major has read the dissenting decision (Holmes Brandeis) in Duplex Printing Co. v. Deering, 245 U. S. 443, 41 Sup. Ct. 172 (1921). The rationale of that dissent—if my memory serve me right—is almost exclusively based on the repudiation of the "atomic" theory of labor; or in other words it is in consonance with Leo's teachings as expounded in "Rerum Novarum" and so ably brought out in Major Kernan's article.

ANTHONY TRABOULSEE.

THE NEW IRISH CONSTITUTION

Cleveland, Ohio.

TO the Editor: Even if Ireland tacitly retains the dominion status with its president presumably standing between the Irish Free State and the English Crown, the present Constitution is a step forward toward representative democracy. Even though certain articles are cleverly vague in relation to the English Crown, and even if certain others do not embody the full spirit of the papal encyclicals, as Padraic Colum pointed out in THE COMMONWEAL of July 16, 1937, I doubt very much whether they represent the social philosophy of Berkeley and I question the gratuitous assertion that the new constitution takes Ireland back to "The Deserted Village." De Valera, for one thing, is not an idle day-dreamer even though he thinks the average woman's place is in the home and that the State needs to be protected from press and radio dictatorship and license.

He likewise had to take into consideration the relentless opposition of Ulster to everything Catholic and progressive, but he did not have to wait until Ulster doffs its high hat and its bigotry, no matter how desirable this poetic wish might be. Is not the welfare of Catholic Eire to be preferred to the personal interests of those few who because of economic necessity choose to reside in Ulster or in England proper? Why should the inhabitants including the protesting women's organizations in the twenty-six counties and the 30,000 annual immigrants to England loom so large in the critic's eye, as to lead him to draw the gratuitous conclusion that the rest of Ireland is not yet ripe for a constitution?

Attempting at this date to incorporate Ulster in the new Irish Free State, or even delaying the issue, might precipitate a civil war. Ignoring Ulster is equivalent to letting her take care of herself and of giving her a glorious chance of minding her own business. If she is so anxious to lay down the law to others let her learn to apply the rule to herself. Inasmuch as Eire must presumably content itself with dominion status, it makes little difference whether there be twenty-six less counties in the Irish Free State, especially since these twenty-six cannot either politically or socially or morally for a long time to come see eye to eye with the Catholic South of Ireland. Is not a peaceful separation of Eire from Ulster preferable to an involuntary or forced union either now or later? Hence the present writer thinks De Valera and those who voted for his bulky but conservative document are wiser than the critics who counsel delay until the lion of Ulster is ready to eat and sleep peacefully with the lambs of Eire. Remaining friends and allies of Britain is far more important than carrying hot coals to Ulster.

REV. ALBERT F. KAISER, C.P.P.S.

THE PLAYS ARE ON THE SHELVES

San Francisco, Calif.

TO the Editor: I consider Mr. Emmet Lavery's article, "The Plays Are on the Shelves" (August 6), worthy of high praise. In it the author proves conclusively that Catholic drama is a very live thing and that if we will only open our eyes and look about us, we will find it. And finding it we should endeavor to bring it before the general public.

To believe that such a move would meet with failure is just another example of that defeatist spirit which dominates so many of our American Catholics for no good reason at all. Mr. Lavery's own play, "The First Legion," an excellent drama, met with tremendous success wherever it was produced. And not only was it a Catholic drama in the fullest sense, but it dealt entirely with the Jesuit Order.

May Mr. Lavery's article be given the intelligent consideration it deserves by Catholic drama groups from coast to coast.

JOHN HANIFY MAHER.

A CATHOLIC BOOK RACK

Malate, Manila, P. I.

TO the Editor: I wonder could you supply me with second-hand pamphlets and Catholic Truth Society booklets and Catholic periodicals.

We have a bookstand and pamphlet rack at the church door, and every Sunday we have a special students' Mass at Santa Cruz Church. There are usually some 2,000 students present.

The following would be in our line: (a) Any Catholic pamphlets, especially on religious, moral and social problems. Communism is going strong here. (b) Catholic Truth Society pamphlets, American or English. (c) Irish Messenger publications. (d) Daniel A. Lord's pamphlets or similar. (e) Any Catholic periodicals. (f) Newspapers, the ones you get as exchanges. (g) Bundles of the *Register* and *Sunday Visitor*. (h) Bundles of *Catholic Worker*. (i) Catholic larger novels; Catholic biographies; Catholic reference books; Catholic apologetics in any form; Catholic histories, etc.

There is no limit to the number of these books, especially the pamphlets, I can use. We have 11,500 students in the organization and there are in all 20,000 students in the secular colleges and universities.

REV. E. J. MCCARTHY.

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Books

Satiric Fantasy

King John of Jingalo, The Story of a Monarch in Difficulties, by Laurence Housman. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50.

THIS satiric fantasy by the author of "Victoria Regina" was originally issued in 1912, and is obviously republished at this time because of a certain pungent appropriateness to events of the past year in a cousinly kingdom across the sea. For it concerns a king who, understanding his people but not his ministers, determines to abdicate, and a young prince whose liaison is openly tolerated, but whose proposed marriage to a commoner is promptly condemned by the powers that be. And the kernel of its message lies in the patient apostrophe of King John to the royal ponies: "You and I, little brothers . . . are much of a muchness, and can sing our 'Te Deum' or our 'Nunc Dimittis' in almost the same words. We are both of a carefully selected breed and of a diminished usefulness. . . . Never shall we go into battle to prove that we are worth our salt . . . nor is it allowed to us to devour the ground with our speed: whenever we attempt such a thing it is cut from under us. Little brothers, it is before all things necessary that we should behave; for being once harnessed to the royal coach, if any of us struck work or threw out our heels we should upset many apple-carts and the machinery of the State would be dislocated. Let us thank God, therefore, that long habit and training have made us docile . . . and that if one of us goes another immediately fills his place so that he is not missed."

The book makes amusing and provocative reading, and is curiously contemporary in many of its saber-thrusts. But it is chiefly interesting as a proof of Laurence Housman's versatility—and a much more valuable proof of this may be found in his exquisite poetic drama of "Bethlehem." This Nativity play, which fell under the British censor's ban back in 1912, might well stand as one of the pillars of the renascent Catholic theatre we are all just now discussing.

KATHERINE BRÉGY.

Fundamental Questions

Economics and Finance; compiled and published by St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minnesota. $.30.

THE INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL STUDY reproduces in this "Social Problem Series," of which "Economics and Finance" is the second limp-covered volume, lectures designed primarily for study clubs and courses. "Economics and Finance" appraises capitalism, economic planning, labor unions, Socialism, distributism and, most particularly, money. The spirit of freedom, experimentalism and realistic sympathy with the dispossessed which permeates the publications of St. John's Abbey is here again gratefully recognized. A Catholic attitude is perhaps propounded more clearly than a program for Catholic reformation. One chapter, for instance, speaks in favor of economic planning, on a most tentative basis at the beginning, but with sufficient optimism to stir the reformer. Another chapter, which plumps for distribution (not synonymous with "back-to-the-land," it is pointed out), carries a section on "the failure of planning." The chapter on labor unions, while solidly backing the right of free association, concludes with disturbing fundamental questions as to the proper policy toward partnership arrangements, and even as to the meaning of the phrase, "vocational groups."

The book is much more absolute when it comes to money and credit. It is almost too easy to be a money radical and to pillory the credit system, but no one has yet—and this book has not—been able to isolate credit problems from those of ownership, of unionism and of social and political power. That the contraction of credit at the depth of the depression was an arbitrary act of money changers who were in a position to act consciously against the whole community of capitalistic owners in order to preserve their peculiar economic power is a thesis apparently advanced in this book, but not, it seems to me, adequately proved. The distinction made between "consumption credit" and "production credit" and the proportions of one to another seem from current statistics rather archaic and also of highly debatable purport. It can hardly be assumed, furthermore, that "the kind of dollar which a generation hence will have the same purchasing power and debt-paying power" of today is the optimum. Stated only that far, a stationary standard of living is also assumed, and it could be persuasively argued that this standard would have to be internally stationary, i. e., the relative variations in standards of living now within society would have to remain what they are today. In general, it might appear that "Economics and Finance" does not go far enough into the causal relationships connecting economics and finance to make bankers look any more like the villains of capitalism than like its whipping boys. Presumably, however, the next volume, "Political Theories and Forms," will dwell at greater length on the problem of power, and perhaps on the method of producing a private property state without capitalism—which is what this book influences a reader to desire.

PHILIP BURNHAM.

Dominicana

The Early Dominicans, by R. F. Bennett. Cambridge: at the University Press; New York: The Macmillan Co. $3.25.

MR. R. F. BENNETT, M. A., has made a real contribution to the social and religious history of the Middle Ages, as well as added another worth-while volume to Dominicana, in this new volume of "Studies in Medieval Life and Thought," under the general editorship of Dr. G. G. Coulton. Honest scholarship marks it. It is the expansion and partial rewriting of an essay which won the Hulsean Prize for 1934. There are ten chapters, three appendices, four pages of authorities, and an index. Beginning with an excellent synthesis of "Europe in 1200," he gives penetrating and balanced chapters on Saint Dominic, poverty and learning in the order, the Dominican preacher and his congregation, the

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types of sermons and their results in the surrounding world; then the static period in the middle of the thirteenth century, and the decline from first fervor, with a final chapter on "Authority and the Constitution." The author says in his preface: "My object throughout has been simply to investigate certain important aspects of the order's history of the time, and to present my results side by side under various headings—indicated by the chapter titles—without attempting to combine all together into a full narrative, or to work out a final judgment."

In this he has succeeded admirably. Only three statements can be open to serious question, and these, I suspect, need clarification rather than proof. These are the one on page 5 in reference to the lack of scriptural warrant for many things the Church said, and the references on page 10 to the Reformation as the only type of reform, and to the selfishness of monasticism. However, these statements cannot fairly be used against the honesty and sincerity of the author. In fact, his treatment of his theme is commended most heartily to all lovers of truth. Had the Dominicans and the rest of Christianity in the thirteenth century been as honest in facing their problems as the authorities of the Church and order were, and Mr. Bennett, in analyzing them, and courageous in heeding the admonitions of authority, history would have taken a different turn. Today, with the aid of such studies as this, we are greatly helped toward that honesty and courage necessary for the salvation of our own times. It means the realization of the definition of the Dominican Order's vocation which, Mr. Bennett says, the first fifty years of the order's history fulfilled: "Honestly to live, to learn, and to teach."

VINCENT C. DONOVAN.

Chuckles and Heart-Throbs

Life with Mother, by Clarence Day. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.00.

THE PUBLISHER'S statement, that this successor to "Life with Father" has "the same marvellous characterizations, the gentle wit, the vigorous good sense combined with gaiety, that made the previous work one of the most loved books of our time," can be accepted only with a lessening in degree of its qualities. For "Life with Mother" is not quite all that "Father" was. It may be that Mr. Day skimmed off the cream in his first collection of essays for some of the present pieces are not up to par. Nevertheless the book remains a delightful one. It will provide many chuckles, many tuggings at heart-strings, due to the fact that it has a universality of appeal which rarely crops up to make a book desired reading for all classes. The Day Mother and Father and their four sons may have enjoyed privileges which go with comfortable means but their episodically presented lives are distinctly American. It is in such pieces as "Mother Shows Us Off," "Mother and Pug Dogs and Rubber Trees" and "Mother and Bessie Skinner's Ring" that all limitations are thrust off and they become as all embracing in appeal as mankind.

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Excellent Translation

Fundamental Questions of Philosophy, by the Rev. August Brunner, S.J.; translated by the Rev. Sidney A. Raemers, Ed.M., Ph.D. St. Louis: B. Herder Book Company. $2.50.

DR. RAEMERS has rendered Father Brunner's German into such smooth English that in reading it one is not at all aware that it is a translation. Apart from that, however, this is not a difficult book to read. The author deals with a great number of questions ranging through practically every branch of the study of philosophy and can, therefore, neither give much space to any one problem nor go very deeply into the discussion of any special points. The book is not remarkable for originality of presentation nor profundity of insight. It states clearly enough a certain number of philosophical positions familiar to all students of Catholic thought and presents arguments which are to be found in more or less the same form in most manuals of scholastic philosophy.

Some portions of the book are rather thin and many pages devoted to the "refutation" of modern philosophers leave much to be desired in point of accuracy. On the whole it is too bad that Dr. Raemers did not choose a more important work to translate into English. It seems a bit futile to waste such excellent talent as a translator upon a mediocre work like this.

GERALD B. PHELAN.

Adventure

The Anointed, by Clyde Brion Davis. New York: Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

TO BRING a human being through the maze of life, unfolding his personality in the simplest of passages, is rare in the field of writing. Mr. Davis has achieved this distinction ably and well. I would say he was on his way to a niche in literature's Hall of Fame. The story of a young man running away from home is not a new idea, but the theme, a hunt for knowledge of the unknown across the "Black Ocean," makes this novel entirely original. His adventure with Limo in the old fortress of Juan de Ullos, in the harbor of Vera Cruz, the sinking of the Chatelaine, and the killing of the consumptive kid are just a few of the thrilling incidents, by means of which Harry Patterson is able to observe his position in life and that of those around him. They confirm his belief in himself and his destiny to be more than the ordinary deck hand.

Actually the narrative rolls along from page to page so that the reader loses all sense in the attraction of the written word. But the real triumph of the book is the character of Harry, who was piloted through years of roughing to come to port at last with his problem solved by one he was able to believe in. And as the publishers say, "Instead of asking you to read the sort of description ordinarily written for the flaps of book jackets, we suggest that instead you turn to the first few pages," and I agree that they are a guarantee of the interest of the whole book.

PHILIP H. WILLIAMS.

Briefer Mention

The Tenth Man, by Reverend E. F. Murphy, S.S.J. Philadelphia, Pa.: The Dolphin Press. $2.00. The Negro, his problems and how they look to men in different walks of life have been treated by Reverend F. E. Murphy with a thoroughness that shows he is well acquainted with his subject. He presents his material in the form of discussion by a visiting Northerner with various citizens of a Southern town, on interracial questions. The final passages deal with a complicated lynching.

Northern Summer, by Goesta af Geijerstam; translated by Joran Birkeland. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $1.50. This short book sketches the summer of a Norwegian family who found and bought a primitive sort of a farm on the beautiful small island in a Norwegian fjord. It has a charm and a lovely natural setting that are quite disarming, in spite of the disturbing absoluteness of their retreat into nature.

Twenty-five Years, by Viscount Grey of Fallodon, K. G. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company. $4.50. A new one-volume edition of brilliant diplomatic memoirs (1892-1916) first published in 1925. Thirty-two illustrations. Required reading for students of modern international diplomacy and for those who would learn the causes of war and how war should be avoided.

The Trap, by Elizabeth Jordan. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company. $2.00. In Mrs. Jordan's latest novel her characters are much more real and entertaining than is the usual rule in books of this genre. The plot itself provides a number of thrills and chills for those susceptible to them and offers pleasant, if not elevating, summer reading.

Oriental Odyssey, by Bob Davis. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company. $3.00. Under the guidance of this master traveler, the reader takes a jaunt through Japan, China and Hawaii. The picturesque description of the characteristics and habits of these nations makes a grand book for one who would be better informed about an important and badly known part of the world.

CONTRIBUTORS

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